

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
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INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMCONSUL BELIZE
USUN NEW YORK 0379

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, PGOV, BB, BH, GT, UK, US

SUBJ: HOUSE DEBATE ON BELIZE CALLS FOR NEW USG POSITION

REF: A) BRIDGETOWN 527 (NOTAL), B) BRIDGETOWN 436

1. DURING A RARE DEBATE ON FOREIGN POLICY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE BARBADOS HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 28, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER HENRY FORDE CALLED ON THE USG TO RECONSIDER ITS EVEN-HANDED POSITION ON THE BELIZE-GUATEMALA DISPUTE AND ADOPT A PRO-BELIZE POSITION. FORDE NOTED AS HE HAS IN THE PAST (REFTELS) THAT THE GOB DOES NOT CONSIDER INTEGRITY OF BELIZEAN TERRITORY NEGOTIABLE. HE ADDED THAT GIVEN QUOTE GUATEMALA'S LACK OF RESPECT FOR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES UNQUOTE IT WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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USG CHOSE TO REMAIN UNCOMMITTED IN THE DISPUTE AND CONTINUED TO SUPPLY WEAPONS TO THE GUATEMALA GOVERNMENT.

2. FORDE'S REMARKS CAME IN SUPPORT OF A RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY A GOVERNMENT BACK-BENCHER CONGRATULATING THE GOB FOR SUPPORTING BELIZE AND APPROVING OF GOB POLCY

IN KEEPING THE ISSUE IN THE FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL
OPINION. THE RESOLUTION, WHICH ALSO RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM
OPPOSITION MEMBERS PRESENT, EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE
PEOPLE OF BELIZE IN ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE WITH FULL
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHIN SECURE BOUNDARIES.

3. COMMENT. THE REMARKS IN THE DEBATE BY FORDE WERE
THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY THE
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER IN THE LAST 30 DAYS THAT HAVE CALLED
FOR A CHANGE IN USG POLICY. TRUE TO HIS WORD, FORDE IS
DETERMINED TO KEEP PRESSURE ON THE USG. FOR THE FIRST
TIME, HOWEVER, FORDE EXPRESSED A WORRY THAT THE UK
MIGHT BE ADOPTING SOME ASPECTS OF THE USG POSITION, I.E.,
FORDE SAID, THAT TERRITORY OF BELIZE IS NEGOTIABLE AND THAT
BELIZEAN INTERESTS MUST BE BALANCED WITH THOSE OF GUATEMALA.
AN OPPOSITION MEMBER THEN QUESTIONED THE
POSITION OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMONWEALTH SHOULD THE UK, US,
GUATEMALA AND BELIZE AGREE ON A SETTLEMENT THAT INCLUDED
CESSION OF TERRITORY. FORDE TREATED THE QUESTION AS A
RHETORICAL ONE.
EDDY

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